Closure of AI's Offices in Europe

1245. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether Air India has declared to shut down eight offices in Europe and hand over the marketing work to general sales agents; and

(b) if so, the reasons for this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Air India has already closed down eight offices in Europe viz., Birmingham, Manchester, Rome, Nice, Lyons, Warsaw, Budapest and Prague.

In Birmingham and Manchester, sales and marketing work is being looked after by the consolidators and in other places by the local IATA (International Air Transport Association) approved travel agents.

(b) The airline industry was reeling under the effects of the global economic slowdown during 2001-02, due to which the international air traffic had been adversely affected. The terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 in the US compounded the problem further resulting in a crisis situation for the world airlines. Air India too was affected by these developments and in order to effect stringent cost control measures, several steps were taken which included closing down/downsizing of Air India offices.

Outsourcing of ticketing by IA

1246. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines have any plan to outsource its ticketing related activities; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether the tenders have been received for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.